



Bitterroot National Forest

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WILDFIRE UPDATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bitterroot NF Fire Update

HAMILTON, MT; AUGUST 8, 2007 PM. Firefighting on the Bitterroot NF rapidly accelerated in the last two weeks. Forest fire forces, in conjunction with local, State, federal and private partners have worked to suppress fires with a high rate of success. The Forest has responded to 138 reports of fire; several turned out to be false alarms, and 15 are being managed as wildland fire use fires but only two of the fires that the Forest set out to suppress have exceeded our initial attack capabilities.

Two Project Fires

The Rombo fire, at 2250 acres, is being managed by a Type II team based near the West Fork Ranger District. Information regarding that fire is provided by the Rombo Fire Information Team, which you can reach by calling 406-821-0082.

The Tin Cup fire, at 500 acres, is managed by a second Type II team based at the Darby School. You can reach the information officers for that fire at 821-4247.

Some web-based resources are also available. The national website at www.inciweb.org seems to be difficult to access due to demand. We are posting daily updates on the Forest's website at www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot/ .

Other Fire News from the Bitterroot

- **Initial attack:** No new starts have been reported in recent days. Our initial attack forces were concentrated on the Tin Cup fire until the Type II team arrived, and are now being released back to the Districts and are once again available for new starts. In addition we have additional initial attack resources arriving today to boost our local resources.
- **Smoke on the Western Horizon:** West of Mill Creek Canyon, smoke from the 19,500 acre Bridge Fire is very visible from highway 93 and residents west of Victor and Corvallis reported light ash falling again Tuesday evening. The Bridge Fire is located on the Clearwater NF, and is 3 – 4 miles west of the ID-MT divide. Interior areas of the fire contain unburned stands and are torching, creating the large smoke plume that is visible today. More information is available at www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater or by calling 208-942-3113.
- **And... Fire on the Eastern Horizon:** The Wyman 2 Fire, located on the Lolo National Forest east of Stevensville, is threatening to burn across the Sapphire Mountain divide onto the Bitterroot side of the mountains. In order to protect the public and provide for firefighter safety, the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forests have closed Trail 313 from Skalkaho Pass to Sawmill Saddle, and all lands east of the trail and in the vicinity of the fire. If you need more detailed information about this trail and area closure call the Bitterroot NF office at 363-7176.
- **Wildland Fire Use Fires:** Many of the 15 wildland fire use fires have grown in the past week. The Harrington Ridge fire burned the remains of the Eakin Cabin, and the Lost Packer cabin which was built in 1972 but is no longer used, is threatened. More information about these fires is available from the West Fork Ranger District at 821-3269. Acreages include:
 - El Cap West: 997 acres
 - Patsy Anne: 555 acres
 - Captain Creek: spot
 - Watch Tower: 40 acres
 - Snake Creek: 160 acres
 - Indian: .5 acre
 - South Saddle Gulch: 83 acres
 - Halfway Pete: 3.5 acres
 - Magruder Trail: spot

- Hayslack Creek: spot
- Magruder Mountain 1: 125 acres
- Magruder Mtn 2: spot
- Harrington Mtn: 150 acres
- Harrington Ridge: 3090 acres
- Elk Horn Ridge: 200 acres

-- In addition to smoke from nearby fires, much larger fires in central and southern Idaho continue to contribute significant smoke to the Bitterroot Valley.

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